

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 IO-14 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-20 TRSE-00 XMB-04
OPIC-06 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15
STR-07 CEA-01 PA-02 /131 W
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R 111740Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6047
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS LONDON 07479

USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

USMTN ALSO FOR MISSION

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, UK, JA
SUBJECT: JAPANESE SHARE OF UK CAR MARKET RISING AGAIN

REF: LONDON 5708 AND PREVIOUS

1. AFTER CONSISTENTLY DECLINING DURING THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF 1978, THE JAPANESE SHARE OF THE UK CAR MARKET ROSE IN APRIL TO SLIGHTLY OVER 11 PERCENT, WITH SALES OF APPROXIMATELY 15,000 UNITS. THUS, FOR THE FIRST FOUR
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MONTHS OF THE YEAR, JAPANESE IMPORT PENETRATION WAS 11.5 PERCENT ON SALES OF 69,696 CARS. WHILE 11.5 PERCENT IS WELL BELOW THE 13 PERCENT JAPANESE MARKET SHARE IN JANUARY, IT IS STILL ABOVE THE UK-JAPANESE AGREED CEILING OF 10.6 PERCENT (I.E., THE 1977 JAPANESE MARKET SHARE).

2. JAPANESE FAILURE TO BRING ITS IMPORT PENETRATION RATE

DOWN TO THE NOW MAGIC FIGURE OF 10.6 PERCENT HAS TRIGGERED ANOTHER BRITISH DEMARCHE IN TOKYO. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS "DEEP CONCERN" WAS EXPRESSED EARLIER THIS WEEK TO MITI, ALONG WITH THE BRITISH EXPECTATION THAT A SHARP DECLINE WILL SOON TAKE PLACE IN BOTH SHIPMENTS AND PENETRATION. ACCORDING TO LONDON PRESS REPORTS, MITI HAS AGAIN GIVEN ASSURANCES THAT IT WILL FULFILL ITS UNDERTAKING.

3. THE OVERALL FOREIGN CAR PENETRATION RATE FOR APRIL IS 48.9 PERCENT, UP FROM 45.4 PERCENT IN APRIL OF 1977. A COMPARISON OF JANUARY-APRIL FIGURES FOR TOTAL FOREIGN CAR SALES SHOWS AN INCREASE FROM 43.5 PERCENT DURING THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 1977 TO 46.5 PERCENT FOR THE SAME PERIOD THIS YEAR.

BREWSTER

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NNN

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